

## **REMARKS**

The enclosed is responsive to the Examiner's Office Action mailed on May 21, 2007. At the time the Examiner mailed the Office Action claims 1-9 were pending and claims 16-20 were withdrawn. By way of the present response the Applicants have: 1) amended claims 1, 4, 7 and 9; 2) added no new claims; and 3) not canceled any claims. As such, claims 1-9 and 16-20 are now pending. The Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application and the allowance of all claims now represented.

### **Claim Rejections**

The Examiner has rejected independent claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,968,179 (hereinafter "De Vries"). The Applicant apologizes to the Examiner for a typographical error appearing in independent claim 1 in the claim submission of 2/16/07. The fifth element of claim 1 should have read "sending said inquiry into said wireless network to said group of users" rather than "sending said inquiry into said wireless network to said group of ". Moreover, unfortunately, the error appears to be pertinent to the distinction between the Applicant's invention and the teachings of the De Vries reference.

Independent claim 1 of the present invention states (emphasis added):

1. A method comprising:
  - sending a request for a return signal into a wireless network to a plurality of users of said wireless network having data processing devices;
  - receiving from said wireless network respective return signals from each of said plurality of users, each of said return signals containing information describing its respective user;
  - receiving from said wireless network an inquiry generated by a first user of said wireless network, said inquiry having predetermined responses associated therewith, and receiving from said wireless network an attribute provided by said first user as a criteria for identifying recipients of said inquiry;
  - automatically selecting a group of users from said plurality of users, each user of said group of users having said attribute, said selecting including analyzing said respective information of each of said plurality of users, said attribute being identifiable from said respective information of each of said selected group of users;
  - forwarding said inquiry into said wireless network to said group of users;
  - receiving from said wireless network responses from one or more users in said group of users; and
  - forwarding said responses into said network to said first user.

The Applicant respectfully submits that one of ordinary skill in the art would realize from a reading of the Applicant's specification that the above claimed process is capable of being performed at single point in/at the network. More specifically, the Applicant respectfully submits that one of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that Network Manager 116 could perform the above claimed process. In this case, Network Manager 116 would: 1) receive an inquiry from a first user; 2) automatically select a group of users; 3) forward the inquiry to the group of users; 4) receive responses from the group of users; and, 5) forward the responses to the first user.

According to this process, the first user (the user that generated the inquiry) does not need to be sent the identities of the selected group of users because the inquiry is forwarded to the group of users by the Network Manager 116. Moreover, the responses to the inquiry are not sent directly to the first user, but rather, are sent to Network Manager 116 which subsequently forwards them to the first user. In this sense, the Network Manager 116 acts like a centralized "hub" that physically handles the

communicative exchange between the inquiring user (the first user) and the users targeted by the inquiry (the group of users). See, Applicant's claim 1 as originally filed.

The De Vries reference does not appear to disclose such a process. As far as the Applicant can tell, De Vries teaches a method in which the identities of the targeted group of users (the first group of users) is sent to the user originating the inquiry (the first user). The first user then sends the inquiry directly to the first group of users. As such, unlike the Applicant's claimed process, the original inquiry is not created before the first group of users is identified nor is it forwarded after its initial launch into the network and subsequent identification of the first group of users. De Vries, col. 8, lines 20-26 is illustrative of the difference (emphasis added)

Upon the user initiating the search operation via the query submission, the information service 100 processes the people/place state data 300 at 403, 404 to determine which of the people B-D on the user's buddy list(s) are within a selected proximity of the user (e.g., people B and C in FIG. 4). The information service 100 at 405 finally returns the results of the search operation to the user.

The Applicant therefore respectfully submits that independent claim 1 is not anticipated by DeVries and should therefore be deemed allowable.

In light of the comments above, the Application respectfully request the allowance of all claims.

**CONCLUSION**

Applicant respectfully submits that all rejections have been overcome and that all pending claims are in condition for allowance.

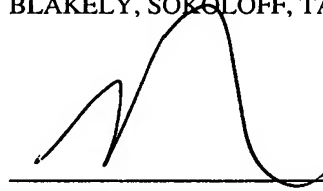
If there are any additional charges, please charge them to our Deposit Account Number 02-2666. If a telephone conference would facilitate the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact Robert B. O'Rourke at (408) 720-8300.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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